Fair Rubber e.V.

Audit Policy

Document Title: Audit Policy
Document ID: FR-POL-ASR-02
Version: 2.0
Approval Body: Board of the Fair Rubber e.V.
Approval Date: 14 August 2026
Effective Date: 01 September 2026
Confidentiality Level: Public

Amendment History

Version	Date	Description	Approved By
1.0	31/03/2023	Initial adoption under name of "Fair Rubber Audit System", included policy and procedural aspects	General Assembly
2.0	14/08/2026	Differentiation between policy and procedure and following recommendations of ISEAL Code v 1.1	Board

Content

1. Purpose

This Policy defines the principles, scope, and governance framework governing audits within the Fair Rubber certification system.

Audits serve to:

a) verify compliance of producer supplier partners with the Fair Rubber Standard;
b) ensure the credibility and integrity of the Fair Rubber system and logo;
c) incentivise continuous improvement at producer level through corrective actions;
d) provide a reliable basis for certification decisions.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to:

a) all audits conducted at producer supplier partners of Fair Rubber;
b) all certification decisions based on audit results;
c) all actors involved in the audit and certification process.

3. Definitions

Audit: A systematic, independent, and documented process for obtaining evidence and evaluating compliance with the Fair Rubber Standard.

Certification Body: An independent third-party conformity assessment body approved by Fair Rubber to conduct audits under the Fair Rubber system.

Certification Assistant: The person at Fair Rubber e.V. responsible for the auditing and certification process.

Certification Committee: Fair Rubber expert body that reviews audit reports and takes the certification decision

Non-Compliance: A failure to meet a requirement of the Fair Rubber Standard, classified as minor or major.

Minor Non-Compliance: A non-compliance that represents a failure to meet a particular requirement without endangering the certification.

Major Non-Compliance: A non-compliance that represents a significant failure to meet a core requirement of the Fair Rubber Standard.

Non-acceptable Major Non-Compliance: In case of such a breach to the standard the audit cannot be passed.

Observation: Option for further improvement in meeting Fair Rubber standards.

Corrective Action: An action taken to eliminate the cause of a detected non-compliance.

Risk Factor Category: A classification used to determine audit frequency based on audit performance and reporting reliability.

4. Audit System Overview

4.1. 4.1. Independent Third-Party Audits

Audits are conducted by an internationally accepted, independent third-party certification body.
Any certification body that carries out audits on behalf of Fair Rubber needs to comply with the "Requirements for Certification Bodies" LINK

Kommentiert [GS1]: This document still needs to be finalized and will be submitted to the board.

4.2. Audit Standard and Protocol

Audits are conducted against:

a) the current version of the Fair Rubber Standard

b) an agreed audit protocol, program manual, and reporting format as defined by Fair Rubber and the certification body.

Audit quality is ensured in line with principles equivalent to ISO/IEC 17065.

5. Audit Frequency and Risk-Based Approach

Audits are conducted on a one-year up to three-year cycle, adjusted through a risk factor system based on:

a) audit performance;
b) quality and timeliness of reporting and communication of the auditee to Fair Rubber
c) documentation of Fair Trade premium use.

5.1. Risk Factor Categories

- Risk Factor 1: Audit interval of three (3) years
- Risk Factor 2: Audit interval of two (2) years
- Risk Factor 3: Audit interval of one (1) year

Risk factors are reviewed following each audit and during ongoing monitoring. The final decision on the risk factor is taken by the committee when it makes its certification decision.

6. Non-Acceptable Major Non-Compliances

Certain standard requirements constitute non-acceptable major non-compliances.
If these are not met, an audit cannot be passed.

These include, inter alia:

a) compliance with national law and fundamental labour rights;
b) compliance with core Fair Trade requirements after the second audit cycle

<u>Non-Acceptable major non-compliances</u>
If following standard requirements are not met, an audit cannot be passed:
- Hired Labor: - Standard 1.3 on national laws
  - Standards 2.1 to 2.5 on ILO conventions
  - Standards 4.1.4 and 4.1.5 on Fair Trade matters (second audit)
- Smallholders/Tappers: - Standard 1.3 on national laws,
  - Standards 4.2.1 – 4.2.3; 4.2.9 on Fair Trade matters (second audit)

More details are defined in the Fair Rubber Standard.

7. Recognition of other Certification Systems

Where producer partners hold certification under other recognized systems (e.g. FSC, Organic, or Fairtrade), Fair Rubber may recognize parts of those systems as equivalent.

Basis for such recognition is the equivalence of standard requirements in both systems;
Examples:
Requirements from the organic certification fully cover Fair Rubber requirements in section 3 of the standards (environmental standards), as well as most of section 2 (social standards) – whereas section 4 needs to be audited separately (Fair Trade standards).

Similar for FSC, where sections 2 and 3 are covered and section 4 needs separate attention.

In case of a Fairtrade certification, section 4 (Fair Trade standards) is fully covered as well as section 2; section 3 (environmental standards) needs separate attention.

Areas for additional audit investigations as above will be defined on a case-by-case basis.

In all such cases:

- audits focus on the remaining Fair Rubber requirements;
  information from other systems' audits is considered;

8. Certification Decision

Audit findings and recommendations form the basis for certification decisions.

Final certification decisions are taken by the Certification Committee on basis of information prepared by the Certifier, ensuring:

a) Independence from audit execution;
b) Documented reasoning;
c) Consistency across decisions.

9. Review and Oversight

This Policy is reviewed periodically to ensure alignment with:

- the Fair Rubber Constitution;
- the Fair Rubber Standard;
- evolving assurance best practices.

End of Policy Document